Afforestation in Assam

*250. SHRIMATI SYED ANWARA TAIMUR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of money released by Government for afforestation in Assam for the year 2004-05;

(b) whether afforestation works have begun; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRINAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) An amount of Rs. 6.73 Crores has been released to Assam during 2004-05 under the National Afforestation Programme of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) An area of 6450 hectares has been covered during 2004-05.

Procurement of crane from Switzerland

†*251. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY:

SHRISANJAYRAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS

be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has procured a crane worth Rs. 800 crore from a Swiss company which has not been utilized so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether irregularities and scam have been committed in the procurement and the said crane is of inferior quality and of lesser capacity;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether two former Railway Ministers have recommended to look into the matter; if so, the details thereof; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(f) whether Government propose to conduct a high level enquiry thereon; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRILALU PRASAD): (a) No, Sir. No cranes have been procured from any Swiss company.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

Utilization of World Bank aid for Gir forest

*252. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large sums of money have been spent on Eco-development scheme on Gir Range in Gujarat under National Park and Sanctuary Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years together with utilization of funds;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a World Bank team visited Sasan (Gir forest) to make an assessment of how World Bank aid has been utilized for development of the forest, lions and infrastructure of adjoining villages of the Gir Range; and

(d) if so, the details of observation of the World Bank team in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The externally aided India Eco-development Project, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Environment and Forests was implemented at the Gir Sanctuary and National Park with a total cost of Rs. 33.79 crores during 1997-98 to 2004-05 till dune, 2004.

(b) Details of funds utilized during the last three years are given as under